



# DOMINIKA MACOCHA

*Bilgoraj*  
*1990*

I am a graduate of Intermedia Studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. In 2016, I defended my master's thesis project in Prof. Grzegorz Kłaman and Dr Dorota Nieznalska's Studio of Transdisciplinary Activities. The work was nominated for the ArtNoble 2017 competition for the best thesis project of public art universities. I completed my first-cycle studies at the University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów, majoring in Journalism and Social Communication, specialising in Computer Graphics in the Media. Since 2018, I have been running the Digital Photography Workshop and the Video Workshop at UITM.

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50°31'29.7"N 22°46'39.1"E  
50°30'56.2"N 22°46'01.0"E  
50°30'41.0"N 22°45'49.5"E

*Video-sculpture installation*  
*2016*

The work touches upon the main theme of a book by Martin Pollack titled *Contaminated Landscapes*, directly transferred to the picturesque Solska Primeval Forest that is adjacent to my home town of Biłgoraj. The forest seems like a site full of peace and harmony, but this idyllic image is undermined by interviews with survivors of the Second World War and quoted remarks of a guide. Static shots showing slight movement of grass, revealing emptiness on the one hand, and on the other – prompting the viewer to seek any traces of life, are there to help imagine the possibility of committing a crime in such conditions, and hiding it for over seventy years. The landscape here is, therefore, a kind of camouflage covering the participation of Poles in murdering Jews during the occupation. Similarly, a popular legend about a church that collapsed in the middle of the forest that is eagerly told by the locals seems to be the result of reprocessing facts which are difficult to accept.

I consider a tree shrine to be a fitting symbol of this type of blurring of history and have made

its reconstruction a part of my work. Crafted from MDF, and was then divided into eight parts. MDF is a material used in mass production, and it is precisely its universality, just like the prevalence of defence mechanisms against painful historical facts, that I find to be of special significance. The object is a mock-up, a model of highly complicated social behaviour, and this complexity has been emphasised by the division of the sculpture. It seems that the work acquires a universal form in this way; by no longer referring to a specific tree, place or event, it alludes to a certain pattern – there could be hundreds of such stories in Europe, as M. Pollack, whom I quote in my film, points out.

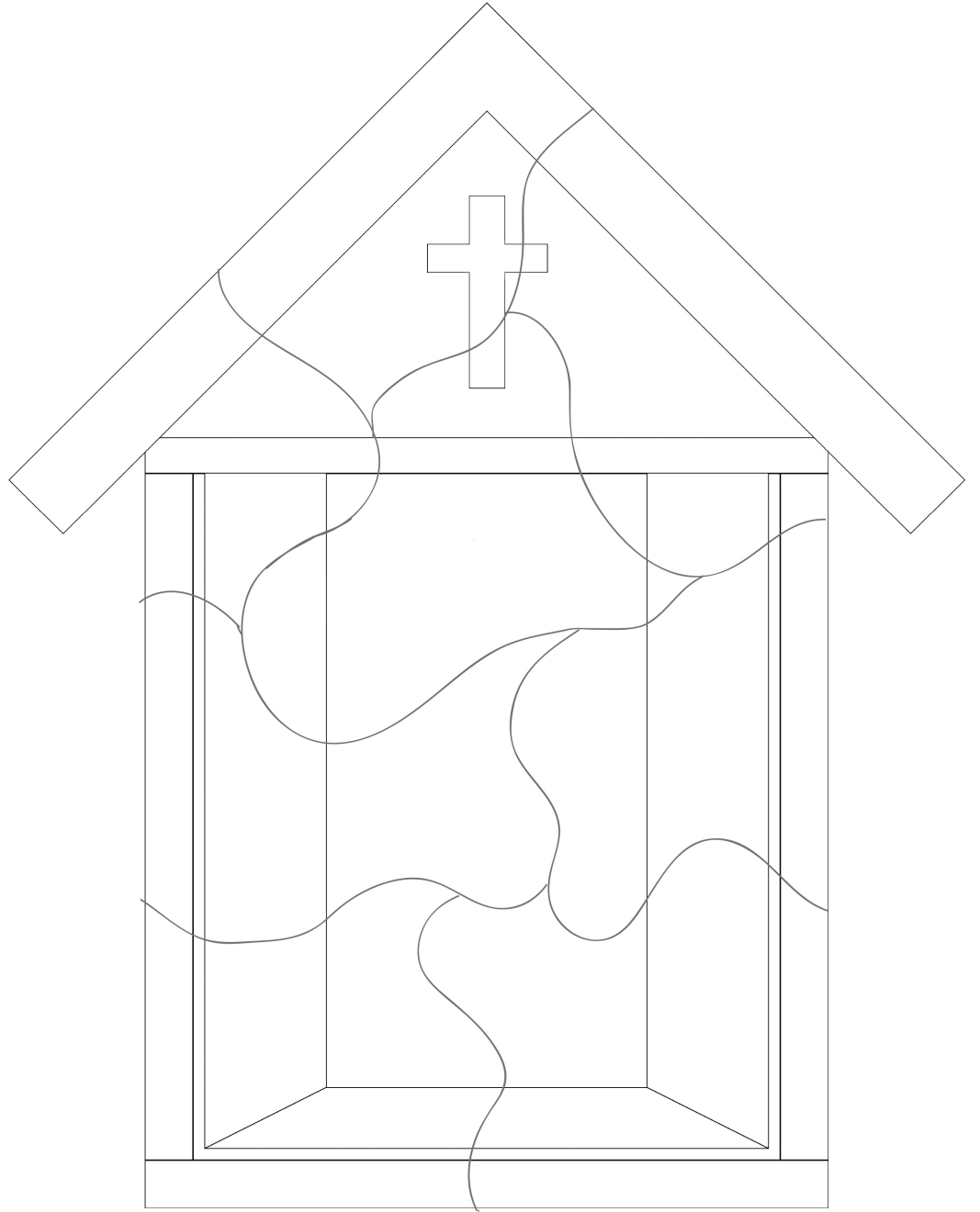
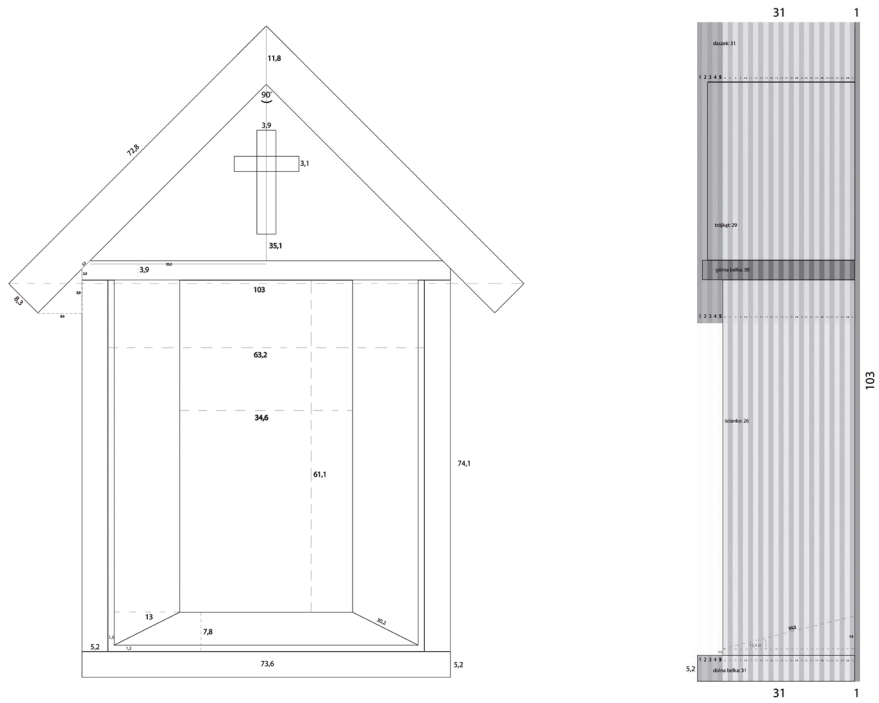
The process in which MDF plates are produced is also important – *by hard pressing wood fibres with the addition of organic binding and hardening compounds, and applying high temperature*. We are, then, dealing with a high processing, which once again indicates the transformation of inconvenient facts into an easily digestible legend.

Dividing the shrine into parts expresses the complexity of people's reactions to such events as well as the diversity of strategies

for coping with them. Disintegration can be treated as a breakdown of the conspiracy of silence, a dismantling of fear, a rift in the cohesion of the legend about a church pulled in by swamps, or more broadly, the breakdown of the myth about Polish innocence.

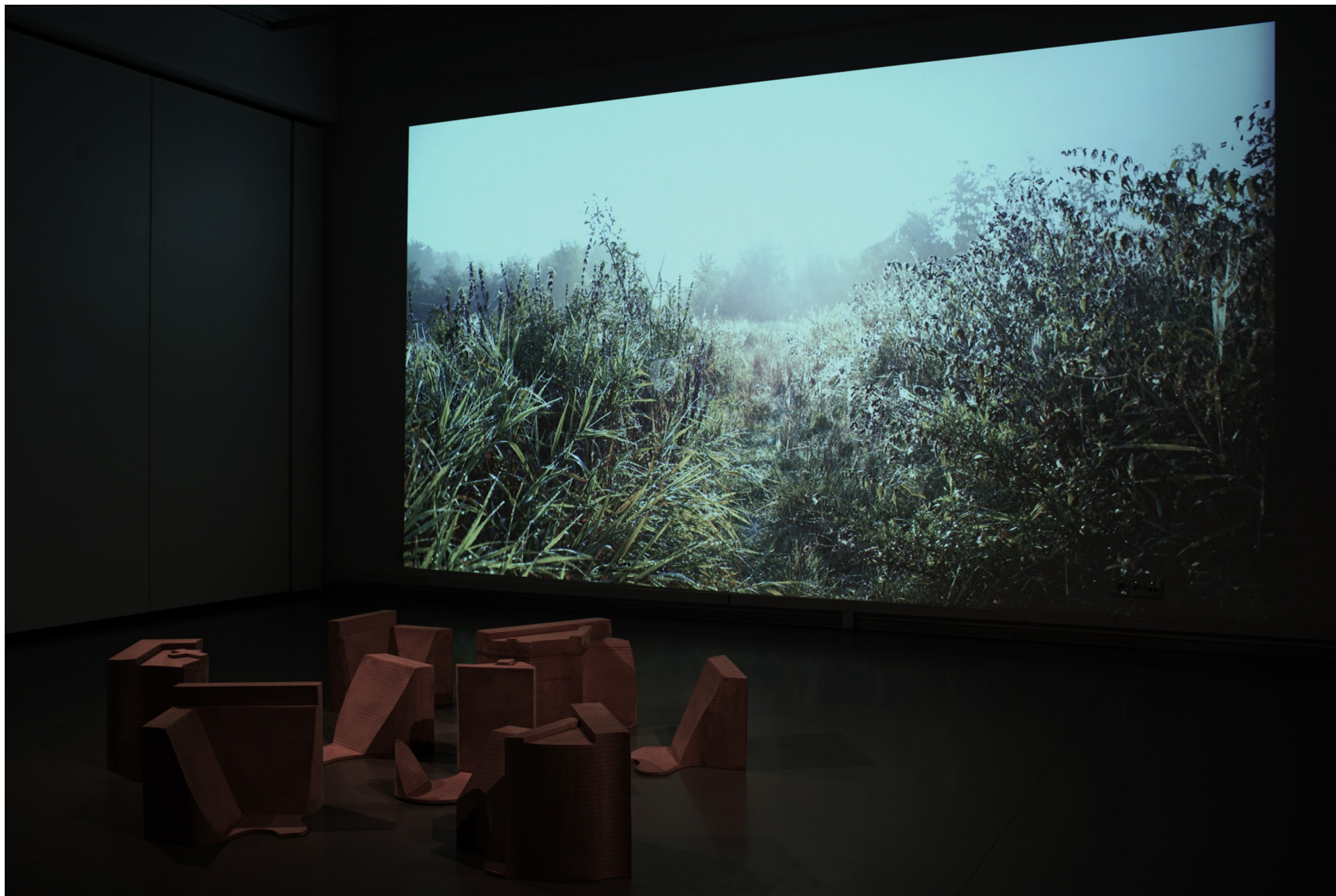
The line along which the sculpture is cut in effect highlights its separate segments, bringing to mind the visualisation of a topographic map. The elements of the object weigh a total of 120 kg. By creating a compact shape, I have given it density and weight. Weight is an important feature of the work, relating to the importance of both the events themselves and the process of obscuring them.

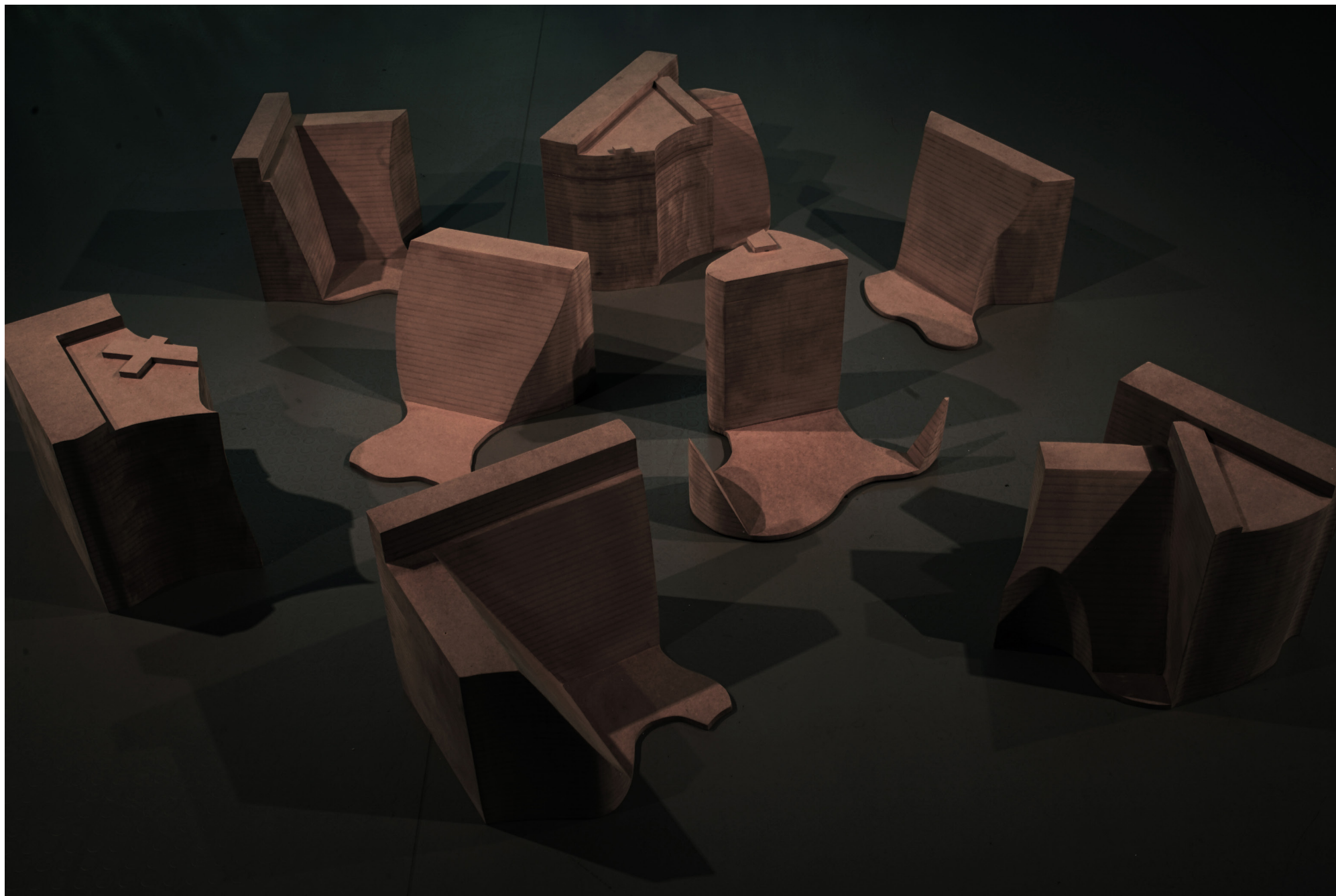
Translated by Magdalena Kunz



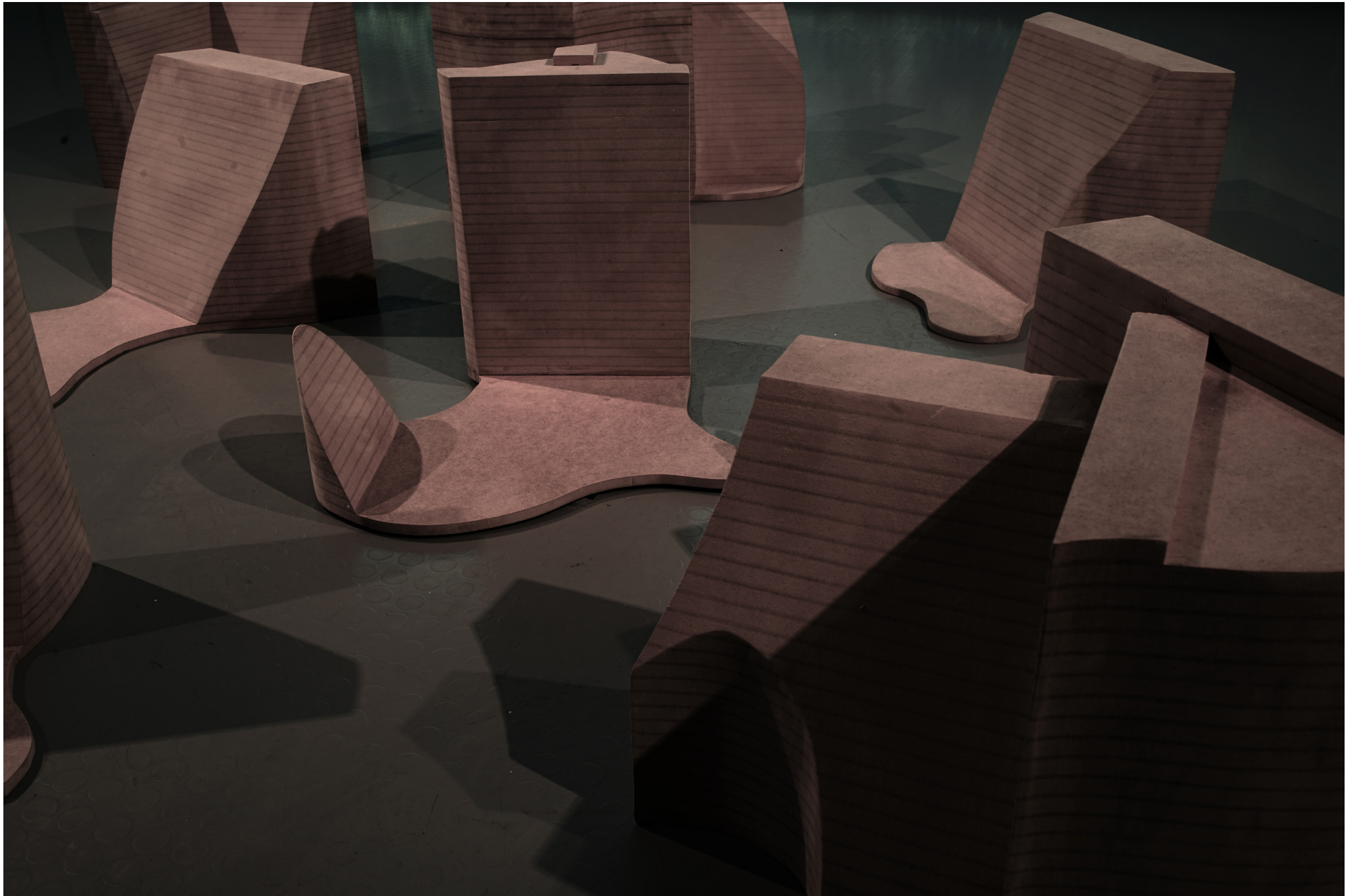


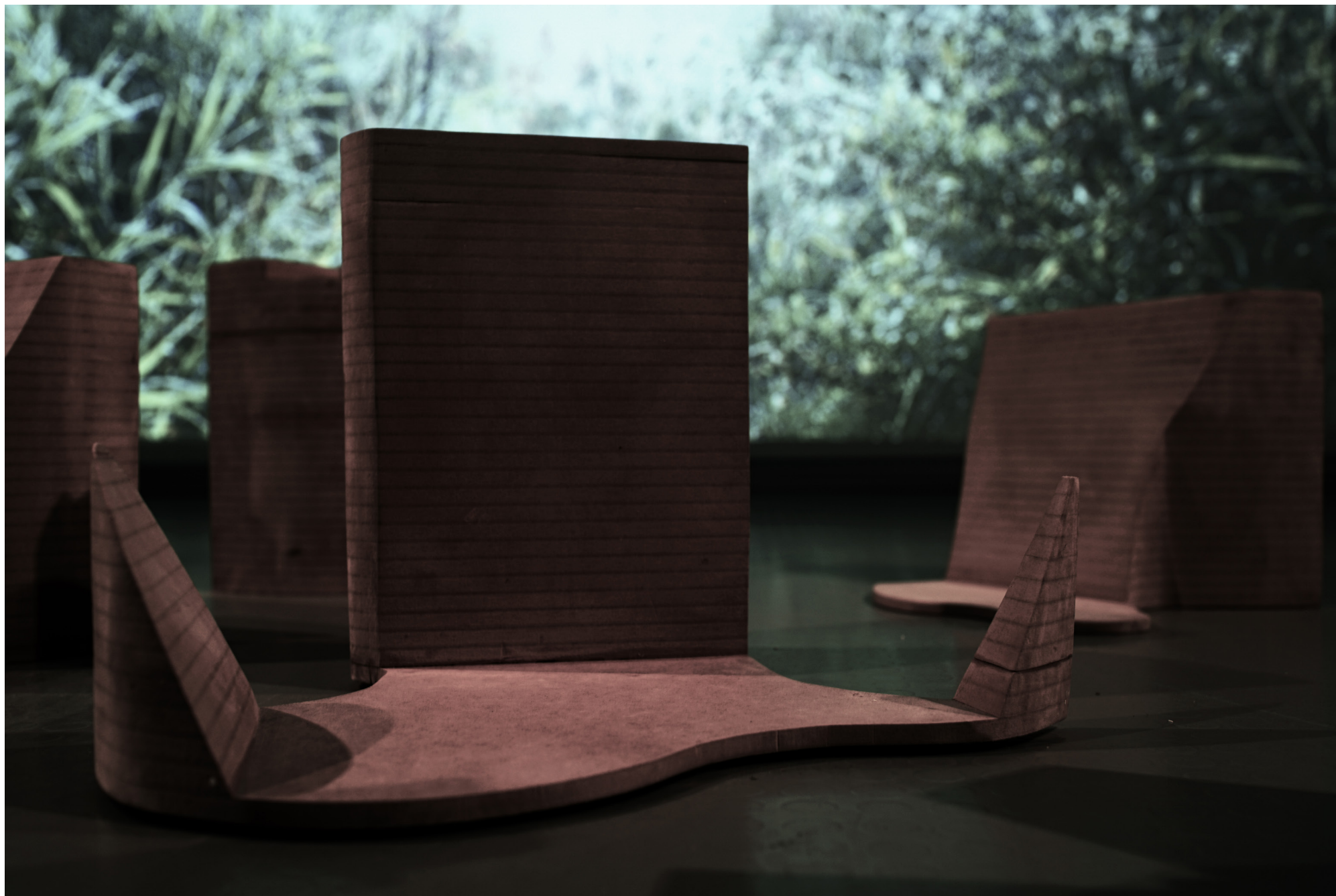
















*Link to the film:*

<https://vimeo.com/490694575>





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